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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1909.

## The Government and the Press.

The government's proceedings against the  
editors of the New York World and the  
Indianapolis News, as was antici-  
pated, prosecutions for the alleged crim-  
inal offense of libel upon individuals, and  
not prosecutions for libels on the govern-  
ment. Although the common law governs  
the District from that of Maryland  
governs the cases, there has been no  
attempt to revive the old English doc-  
trine that malicious attacks on govern-  
ment officers were libels on government.  
To all appearances the actions have full  
warrant in statutory law, and, though  
unusual, have their counterpart in other  
prosecutions for offenses against Federal  
law.

A vital point in the cases is whether  
the defendants can be made to answer  
for the publication of the alleged libel in  
the District of Columbia. On two previous  
occasions, when it was sought to hale a  
non-resident editor before the District  
courts for libel, the attempt failed be-  
cause of the refusal of the judiciary to  
sanction what was then considered a  
radical departure from legal procedure by  
delivering up the defendant for trial. It  
was felt that the liberty of the press was  
threatened by the assertion of a power  
in the Federal government to bring to  
Washington any editor whose utterances  
were published, in a technical sense,  
within the jurisdiction of the District of  
Columbia, and that the trial of a person  
for an offense in any other place than  
that wherein it is committed would be  
in violation of the constitutional rights of  
the accused. The decisions of the courts  
in both these cases supported the view  
that it was impossible to do what is now  
being attempted in the cases of the editors  
of the New York and Indianapolis news-  
papers.

Since those decisions were made there  
has been new legislation and a new  
interpretation of the rights of accused  
persons under the statutes and the Con-  
stitution. The power of the Federal arm  
has been increased, and it may be that  
the novel principle will be established  
that the editors of American newspapers  
can be brought to Washington to answer  
for what a District grand jury may con-  
ceive to be libelous publications concern-  
ing the conduct of public officials and  
private citizens. We do not believe it  
was in the thought of Congress, however,  
when the statutes now invoked were en-  
acted, to lodge any such power in the  
Federal government. If the liberty of the  
press is to be a dozen years ago, in  
proceedings analogous to these, that lib-  
erty is now, as then, in the keeping of  
the courts.

The lock canal shall be vindicated, even  
if it swells the Annapolis Club to four  
times its present status, presumably.

Come, come, "Uncle Andy"

Of all the millionaires beneath the skies,  
we admire, from many points of view,  
"Uncle Andy" Carnegie just a little more  
than any of his esteemed contemporaries.

As we view in beautiful retrospect his  
many acts of public financial gracious-  
ness, as we observe the land bespattered  
with libraries from Maine to California  
and from Washington to Key West, we  
are moved anew to enthusiasm and pro-  
found and vociferous appreciation. Evi-  
dence of his philanthropy abounds on all  
sides; it stares you in the face in Atlanta,  
and it gives you compelling pause in  
Walla Walla. It does not shriek, of  
course, albeit it does not whisper exactly.  
But it is there—ever on the job, even as  
a good soldier should be.

In view of these preliminary thoughts,  
it gives us no small measure of pain to  
chronicle herein the alleged fact that  
"Uncle Andy" inclines to grow a little  
"near"; "light-waddish," indeed, as vul-  
garisms put it, sort of thing, in their  
rough, but oft wonderfully expressive  
way. It has long been recognized as  
typically Carnegieesque, to be sure, that  
no donation might be expected from his  
ample exchequer until augmented by one  
of like proportions from outside and less  
important and illustrious givers. True,  
some carping ones have balked at that,  
here and there; but, in the main, all has  
gone as merrily as wedding bells.

Now that "Uncle Andy" has announced  
his intention to give a certain college  
\$25,000, however, on condition that the  
said college raise from other sources the  
sum of \$175,000 to go with it, we are prone  
to hesitate the while we ask, Whither are  
we and "Uncle Andy" drifting? Is it  
his purpose to restrict his benevolence in  
the future to a 1 to 7 basis? Perish the  
unhallowed and ungodly thought. That  
might do for some millionaires, but not  
this one. If we mistake not, we have  
been admonished in days gone that the  
1 to 1 ratio generally brought more an-  
guish to "Uncle Andy's" soul than the  
1 to 7 ratio. "Uncle Andy's" soul then was  
comfortable to bear, and that he only  
imposed it because he thought it to be  
his solemn duty. To suspect that he con-  
templates bitter pills in this regard up-  
sets our long-cultivated and piously  
nursed contrary opinion.

And so, we are moved to dispute the  
canard in respect of his alleged "near-

ness," or "light-waddishness," heretofore  
set down and noted. We shall not at-  
tempt to explain this 1 to 7 thing that  
looms with admitted ominousness in our  
pathway at this particular moment; but  
we shall approach it even as Pilgrim  
approached some of the monsters that  
arose in his way, firm in the faith that  
it is merely a scarecrow, impotent of  
harm, and to be explained away diplo-  
matically and satisfactorily in "Uncle  
Andy's" own good time.

Whenever Congress feels tempted to  
view the growing Treasury deficit with  
alarm, it can point with pride to the  
reduction of the next Secretary of State's  
salary.

## Not to Press a Tariff Commission.

While the Indianapolis tariff convention  
was demanding, with all the fervor of  
a paper resolution, that Congress should  
immediately create a permanent tariff  
commission, the fate of the commission  
scheme was settled at a quiet conference  
here in Washington of the triumvirate  
which will rule the destinies of the re-  
public after March 4 next. The conferees  
were President-elect Taft, Speaker Can-  
non, and Senator Aldrich. It was deter-  
mined that there should be no tariff com-  
mission, and there will be none. We are  
indebted to the Washington correspond-  
ence of the New York Tribune for the  
significant details.

"Messrs. Aldrich and Cannon told the Presi-  
dent that there was not the slightest use in urging  
the tariff commission idea on Congress, that Con-  
gress would have none of it. They said they were  
convinced that a commission would serve no good  
purpose; that the Finance and Ways and Means  
committees of Congress were composed of tariff ex-  
perts, who were amply competent to redraft the  
schedules, and that the members of both Houses  
would be most unwilling to delegate their prerogatives  
to a commission or to accept its recommendations,  
which was a commission created.

"The President-elect did not commit himself on  
the subject, but said that the use which was being  
made of his letter was unwarranted and indicated  
that as the method by which Congress arrived at  
its conclusions with regard to the necessary changes  
in the tariff schedules was a legislative matter, he  
did not purpose to interfere. He asked results, he  
said, including a material modification of the tariff  
rates, and if Congress would give him that he  
would cheerfully refrain from proposing the manner  
in which such results were to be attained. He re-  
sponded perfectly to the sincerity of the party  
leaders to conduct a genuine tariff revision, and  
said that he realized perfectly that the responsibilities  
of the Executive ended when he had sub-  
mitted such facts as he possessed to Congress by  
message, and that he would not, in any case, use  
any extreme advocates of 'waddishness' with  
whom the leaders might have to deal, could be  
truthfully resented that the President would deem  
it his duty to veto a tariff bill which failed to  
carry out the pledges made by the party in its  
national platform."

We assume the letter which the Presi-  
dent-elect asserts to have been unwarrant-  
ably used is the one sent from Aug-  
usta, Ga., to Henry Riesenberger, of In-  
dianapolis, under date of January 5 last:

"My Dear Sir: I quite agree with you in the  
advantage of having a permanent tariff commis-  
sion, and will do all in my power to make pro-  
vision for some such body, if I could—let me say  
exactly. Sincerely yours, WM. H. TAFT."

Subsequently Mr. Taft took pains, in a  
letter to Chairman Seneca E. Payne, to  
make it clear that in advocating a tariff  
commission he did not assent to the notion  
that the fixing of tariff rates should be  
devolved upon a commission, as that  
would be unconstitutional, for Congress  
alone has power to levy taxation, and  
all bills for raising revenue must origi-  
nate in the House. However, this quali-  
fication of his views did not alter his  
opinion on the main issue, and much has  
been made at the Indianapolis convention  
of the adhesion of both President Roose-  
velt and Mr. Taft to the commission idea.  
It now appears that Mr. Taft's belief  
in the desirability of a tariff commission  
is purely academic. He will not propose  
the creation of any such body, since he  
has the assurance of the leaders of Con-  
gress that a tariff bill can be better  
framed in the good old way. As a con-  
stitutional Executive, he is willing to let  
Congress attend to its own business after  
its own fashion.

Naturally, Mr. Taft's complaisant atti-  
tude on this matter is a source of un-  
restrained Congressional joy. We are told  
that the leaders "like his method of leav-  
ing to them the settlement of the date  
on which the special session should be  
called, and his willingness to refrain  
from urging on them a commission." Mr.  
Taft, they are saying, treats their opin-  
ions with respect and consideration, and  
appears willing to listen to advice. It is  
all very lovely, suggestive of all manner  
of good times and good things. We shall  
later see how Mr. Taft's touching faith  
in the sincerity of the tariff revisers is  
rewarded. If the old way of framing  
schedules is all right, perhaps the old  
brand of protection is all right, too.

## Protracted Army Details.

The House rejected on a point of  
order the clause contained in the army  
appropriation bill as reported from com-  
mittee, providing for a reduction in the  
personnel of the General Staff of the War  
Department by six of its twelve majors  
and all of its captains. But Mr. Hull,  
the chairman of the House Military  
Committee, stated on the floor that  
"within a short time we will bring in a  
bill that will deal with the whole ques-  
tion in a way that no point of order can  
be made against it." By "the whole  
question" Mr. Hull had reference, evi-  
dently, to the system of detailing officers  
for duty away from their line commands.

It has been supposed that details to  
duty of this sort required an absence of  
more than four years, but as this  
absenteeism is controlled entirely by mili-  
tary regulation, and is to some extent  
influenced by personal favor and service  
prejudice, the situation has assumed  
grotesque proportions. At least, that is  
what Mr. Hull has informed the House,  
and he ought to be in a position to know  
whereof he speaks. There is certainly  
something impressive in the statement  
Mr. Hull made to the House when he said:  
"I want to say to the House that the habit has  
grown up in the department of officers coming to  
Washington and serving probably four years in one  
detail, and then, if aids to a general, the general  
retiring puts him in the General Staff. Then they  
serve four years and are detailed either there  
or some other place, and we had one of a man  
last year who had been on detail for fourteen  
years, and the Committee on Military Affairs  
feared that if the detail system is to be kept up  
that part which provides that officers are to serve  
in the line of the army ought to be enforced.  
Service in the line is of very great importance."

This is a state of affairs which calls  
for reformation, not only in the interest

of military efficiency, but to destroy such  
favoritism as must be manifested in the  
incident related by Mr. Hull. It is high  
time that such things were stopped.

"It yet remains for some enterprising  
aeronaut to teach ballooning by corre-  
spondence," says the Youngstown Tele-  
gram. In view of the present status of  
the gentle art of ballooning, we are not  
sure but that it would be a fairly satis-  
factory method of learning for the aver-  
age layman to employ.

If there were any doubt that the present  
theatrical season has not been much of a  
success financially up to this time, the  
present talk of reforming and uplifting  
the stage would be so nearly inaudible  
you could not hear it with an ear trumpet  
at close range.

"A new crack has been discovered in  
the old Liberty Bell," says the Buffalo  
Express. Still, the old Constitution re-  
mains many cracks ahead of its nearest  
competitor.

Abraham Lincoln was a rail-splitter in  
his youth, which is probably the reason  
he never learned to be much of a rail-  
splitter in his maturer years.

A New Jersey farmer has caused it to  
be sent abroad that he does not care  
particularly whether his runaway boy  
comes back home or not; that he is get-  
ting along fairly well with the seven he  
still has on hand. Runaway will prob-  
ably show up about the house a few  
days after he hears that, he fancy.

Yes, anxious Inquirer, it is perfectly  
good form nowadays to ask your guests,  
in serving an egg, to designate a prefer-  
ence between the white and the yellow  
meats.

If it were an airship navy—whatever  
that is—and a Rocky Mountain perch  
were necessary in its business, why, of  
course, Senator Dixon might be willing to  
see it disappear.

The Tribune, of Rome, Italy, is some-  
what agitated, not to say indignant,  
over the suggestion that Mr. Roosevelt  
will remain in that city only a few short  
hours when he pays that forthcoming  
visit. We trust, however, this will not  
precipitate another war scare.

"I have come to Henderson to run a  
new newspaper," is the entire salu-  
tatory of a Kentucky editor. The increased cost  
of white paper is getting in some deadly  
work in spots throughout this land.

King Edward has a severe sore throat.  
Evidently the exertion of talking through  
his hat to Emperor William was a severe  
strain on his English majesty's vocal  
equipment.

Careful, Senator Kittredge! Right on  
the corner of Skidoo avenue and Twenty-  
third street is the headquarters of the  
A. Club—and the A does not stand for  
"Athletic," either.

Apparently, we are going mad in this  
country on the subject of the sons and  
daughters of things. We now have an  
organization of appendicitis people.

Better no vice admiral than fight the  
Spanish-American war all over again!

The weather man is certainly doing his  
level best to encourage Congress to come  
across with that salary raise.

The Pennsylvania legislature has passed  
a law prohibiting the sale of bad eggs.  
Perhaps it was afraid something un-  
pleasant might happen to it if it failed  
thus to take time by the forelock.

It is not likely that Congress will pay  
any particular attention to that C. Q. D.  
signal flying from the United States  
Treasury, however.

How many guesses does the House of  
Representatives think it is entitled to in  
the matter of Senator Knox's eligibility,  
anyway?

A Georgia man, well along in the six-  
ties, when arrested last week for having  
five barrels of whisky in his possession,  
said he had only been seeking intelligent-  
ly to guard against the possible perma-  
nency of prohibition thereafter. We  
suspect this man's neighbors are afflicted  
extensively with the borrowing habit.

The people of Arkansas probably look  
upon Senator "Jeff" Davis' alleged re-  
cent automobile ride to the White House  
as a mythical story basely fabricated by  
the plutocrats for his political undoing.

Impossible story—beginning, respectfully  
submitted to the New York Mail: "Elated  
at having won the pennant, the Wash-  
ington baseball team—"

Congress will meet in extraordinary  
session on March 15. But che-e-e-er up!  
St. Patrick's Day comes forty-eight days  
later.

"The great distinguished will soon be  
the great extinguished," says the Balti-  
more Sun. Provided, if, however, but  
on the contrary, of course.

Senator La Follette says Senator Hale  
is "inconsistent." Oh, well, what is con-  
sistency between friends, Senator?

## Naval Disarmament.

From the Boston Herald.  
Is it a fixed preference for war ships  
of small dimensions, or fealty to the navy  
yards, which inspires Senator Hale to  
resent all criticism of the inadvisability of  
government docks for the accommodation  
of the battle-ship fleet? The navy yards,  
winding channels, mud flats, sand bars,  
and all, are all right, says the Maine  
member of the Naval Affairs Committee.  
But the battle ships are too big! The  
theory affords a suggestion for the peace  
congresses and disarmament propaganda.  
Get the nations to adopt a navy-yard  
standard for battle-ship construction.  
Then leave it to Nature to work out the  
disarmament of navies.

## He's on the Firing Line.

From the Indianapolis News.  
The Speaker's remark that there is one  
old Cannon that has not yet been con-  
demned would appear to be entirely too  
conservative a statement of the situation.

## It's a Trust Invention.

From the Philadelphia North American.  
The Fletcher method of chewing slowly  
to induce long life was discovered by the  
trusts long ago. And they chew not only  
slowly, but very fine.

## All P's.

From the Chicago Record-Herald.  
Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman says  
man is a noun and woman a preposi-  
tion. A good many of the men whom we know  
are pronouns.

## Optimistic.

From the Ohio State Journal.  
Our confidential prediction is that at-  
mospheric conditions in Washington on  
March 4 will at least seem pleasant to a  
great many people.

## Where's the Cash?

From the Boston Transcript.  
Advocates of a sea-level canal will kind-  
ly produce the additional \$175,000,000.

## A LITTLE NONSENSE.

## THE GADZOOKS HEROES.

In days of old  
When knights were bold  
And quick to draw the blade,  
Their endless scraps  
For writing chaps  
A deal of copy made.

And it was well,  
As things befell,  
That they did slash and carve.  
For had they not,  
To-day a lot  
Of novelists would starve.

## Would Seem Not.

"In these stories of the Middle Ages, we  
always read about the hero's good right  
arm."

"Well?"

"Was there never a southpaw knight?"

## Correcting an Impression.

"Yes, I am from the South."

"I would like to ask you a little  
question."

"I can answer that question without  
your asking it. No, we do not submit  
entirely upon 'possum in the South."

## Blank Verse.

In writing poetry one needs a point,  
Also a rhyme.  
We have seen poems, however,  
Without either.

## Childish Questions.

"That boy of mine asks more questions  
than I can answer."

"How now?"

"He wants to know if Noah took fishes  
into the ark."

## The Next Chapter.

"Why does a love story always end  
with the marriage of the interested par-  
ties?"

"You would like further particulars?"

"I would. Take the case of Ivanhoe  
and Rowena, for instance. Did they keep  
house or board?"

## Had to Subscribe.

"What cured him of flirting?"

"He tried to flirt with a lady who was  
selling books at \$300 per set."

## SPEAKING OUT IN PUBLIC.

Our Lack of Silence Commanded by  
an Englishman.

Gilbert K. Chesterton, in Hampton's Magazine.  
Briefly, the real superiority of America  
over England is in this: that in America  
you can shut your mouth, but you cannot shut  
your mouth. You can create an elegant Ameri-  
can society in which Mr. Hearst is never  
mentioned; but you cannot restrain Mr.  
Hearst from the not ungenerous occupa-  
tion of mentioning himself. In England  
you can. In England by a certain univer-  
sal pressure of fashion and false good  
taste working downward through the arist-  
ocracy, the Parliament, and the private  
owners of the public press, even the King  
(is not powerless). It is possible for all  
practical purposes, to prevent a point of  
view being really uttered at all. There  
are certain facts which I know to be cer-  
tain facts, of which I can say with com-  
plete and solid sincerity, that if I were  
to write them down it is not only true  
that no Englishman would believe them,  
but it is certain that no Englishman  
would print them. To America, such sen-  
sations are, if you will, declared scandalous.  
But they are declared. In an American  
paper, very likely, Lord Northcliffe,  
for instance, might be described  
as a "rather formal affair" and a "very  
fresh-faced, energetic man who has no  
little imagination that he collects money  
as children collect tram tickets. But the  
point is that he could be hit hard for the  
good of the common man and the common  
thing. But in England people would think more  
of his feelings than of the public good;  
because England is governed by a small  
group of families and is therefore forced  
to be almost entirely in terms of per-  
sonality. The pursuit of English politics is  
that so much of it is conducted in a good-  
natured whisper, about "poor young So-  
and-so" or "good old What's-His-Name."  
Many good Americans have complained  
that in America all private life is made  
public. But in England all public life is  
made private.

I come back, therefore, as I always love  
to do, to truism; to the truism of 1909  
ago. After all, the thing whereby  
America really towers over the old coun-  
try is the thing which Jefferson reared  
and Washington defended. The solid good  
of America is that when all is said and  
done she is a republic. A public thing,  
and people representing itself. There  
are men rich enough, and strong enough,  
almost to starve America; but there are  
no men strong enough to silence America.  
No oligarchy acts as an entirely free  
interpreter between Americans and the  
world. America and the Americans may  
be right or wrong. But England may  
actually be wrong while Englishmen are  
right. We have said that the true  
American virtue is this candid and com-  
plete democracy, the fact that the truth  
may be told even if it is not believed.

## BLESSINGS IN MILITARISM.

## A Specious Argument, but It Has a Serious Flaw.

From the Detroit Free Press.  
Apologists for militarism are becoming  
both numerous and persistent. The navy  
and the army are now painted as directly  
benefiting mankind. Many are the devices  
adopted to make the burden of their cost  
seem less galling.

At least two writers in this month's  
reviews have taken this line of argument.  
Admiral Evans, here in Detroit, used very  
similar ideas. The young men in the  
navy receive a training they could hardly  
secure on shore, he said; there is hardly  
a trade that is not taught on board the  
ships of the fleet.

The magazine writers add another reason  
for finding blessings in naval arma-  
ments. The building of the ships keeps  
capital employed and uses a great amount  
of labor that would otherwise be idle.  
The labor value of a dreadnought is  
the common theme of the military and  
the navy. The navy is a service to the  
country, they say, and it is a service to  
the navy's own people.

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## WASHINGTON CHAT.

## By THE SPECTATOR.

Those unacquainted with the exigencies  
of social life in Washington are prone to  
make sport of the social secretary. Such  
an assistant, however, is not only inval-  
uable, but necessary to a person who is  
really in society. The obligations of a  
society man or woman at the Capital are  
no sinecure, but require strength, vigi-  
lance, knowledge, and experience, and  
possessed of these even its duties are not  
exacting to be properly accomplished  
without the aid of a social expert. One  
of the most important requirements in  
this connection is to keep a list of en-  
gagements, for the most accomplished  
and experienced person is apt, through  
carelessness or absorption in other things,  
to make a mistake. Only recently cer-  
tain general in full dress appeared at a  
house in the West End with the evident  
intention of staying to dinner. As he had  
not been invited until the following week  
the hostess was somewhat astonished that  
he had come without invitation. But the  
dinner was served and everything  
passed off pleasantly until about the mid-  
dle of the meal, when the telephone  
rang and a request was made for Gen.  
So-and-so. The hostess, in order to re-  
ceive a message from his clerk to the  
effect that he was due at another house  
for dinner; that he had mistaken her  
dates, and that his hostess was still wait-  
ing for him. Explanations were made,  
of course, and the affair was treated  
as a joke, but under other circumstances  
it might have been very annoying.

Mr. Taft, the father of the President-  
elect, when he came here to accept the  
portfolio of Secretary of War, was the  
victim of a like mistake. The late Sen-  
ator Justin S. Morrill, who had advocated  
his appointment, had arranged a dinner  
for his honor immediately upon his arrival  
in Washington. The invitations were dis-  
patched several weeks before the date set,  
and on the night appointed the guests  
who had been asked to meet him assem-  
bled, and the Secretary of War, Mr. Taft  
appeared, nor was any explanation  
accounting for his absence forthcoming.

Dinner was finally served and eaten, and  
the convives departed, but still no explana-  
tion from the Secretary of War. The  
Senator and Mr. Taft's wife passed the  
evening in the parlors, and Mr. Taft was  
in the dark as to the misunderstanding.  
For misunderstanding they knew it to be.  
One day, however, the Senator from Ver-  
mont received a letter from the Secretary  
of War which explained the matter. He  
previously to coming to Washington, and  
his duties on arrival, had so absorbed  
him, he said, that he had been compelled  
to depend upon his secretary to keep a  
record of his social engagements, and  
that person being inexperienced in such  
matters, overlooked the date of the Mor-  
rill dinner, hence the contre-temps.

A similar amusing incident happened to  
the late Elliott Cowles, who was famous  
as an ornithologist and noted for liter-  
ary attainments in other fields, his last  
work before he died, some ten years ago,  
being a new edition of the Lewis and  
Clark Expedition. Dr. Cowles had been  
invited by Tyndall, Huxley, and other  
noted scientists to establish himself  
in London, and went abroad for the  
purpose of talking this invitation over. Nat-  
urally, so distinguished a man was much  
sought after by the English aristocracy,  
and the English capital, and there was  
hardly a day went by that he was not  
invited to dine out. One evening he  
drove to a certain street and number in  
the fashionable part of London, and  
finding the bell was ushered into a  
pleasant and attractive drawing room,  
where an interesting family was assem-  
bled. He had not met his hostess be-  
fore, but the greeting he received was  
so cordial that he felt at once at ease.  
He was astonished, however, to find  
no other guests but himself, as he  
had taken it for granted from the char-  
acter of